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Items 7, 8 and 9 of the
provisional agenda*

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Statement submitted by the International Federation of Women Lawyers, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category II

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 23 and 24 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968.

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Resolutions adopted by the International Federation of Women Lawyers

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:

1. The family is the natural and basic element of society and is entitled to protection from society and the state. Accordingly, the International Federation of Women Lawyers member countries must be asked to provide for state protection to the family in their constitutions.

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* E/1991/30.

2. In compliance with the international convention signed in Copenhagen in 1980,* the following principle was accepted as a constitutional norm:

"The state shall guarantee all persons equal exercise of all human, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights contained in the International Charter of Human Rights, irrespective of sex."

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:

3. Governments of all countries must be urged;

I. To ratify and comply with the principles of the convention as a constitutional norm;

II. To establish rules that have a positive effect on the status of women;

III. To create a Women's Affairs Office and, where such office exists to see that the convention is implemented.

4. Cultural change must be sought through the family, educators and the mass media to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, who also must become aware of their merit in order to improve their own condition and self-esteem.

EDUCATION FOR PEACE

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:

The International Federation of Women Lawyers undertake a programme to ensure education for peace in the various countries in which it is represented and that it seek to secure financing from different international organizations for its implementation in each country.

WOMEN AS THE CENTRE OF HEALTH IN THE HOME

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:

The XXV General Assembly of the International Federation of Women Lawyers recognizes the primacy of the role of women in the health of the family and determines that the International Federation of Women Lawyers will develop a programme entitled "Women as the Centre of Health in the Home" to be disseminated and implemented in the countries where the International Federation of Women Lawyers is represented.

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* Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex).

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:

In order to combat violence against women and children:

1. Programmes be supported to generate awareness of and educate men and women about responsible parenthood.

2. Governments be urged to:

   I. Support programmes for free education of minors to enable them to receive an appropriate education.

   II. Undertake campaigns for the protection of women and abandoned and abused children.

   III. Allocate in their national budgets the resources necessary to provide for the protection of women and children.

   IV. Implement systems to rehabilitate those responsible for domestic violence to prevent recurrence of their former behaviour.

IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

Capital punishment be abolished, especially as regards persons under the age of 18 years.

ABORTION

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:

Each country be urged:

   I. To undertake comprehensive campaigns of information regarding effective family planning;

   II. To provide finance for the free availability of the means of contraception;

   III. That abortion be available to all women desiring abortion, including proper medical after-care.

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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

Statement submitted by the Four Directions Council, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category II

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 23 and 24 of Economic and Social Council resoultuion 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968.

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International Year for the World's Indigenous People

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 45/164 of 18 December 1990, proclaimed 1993 as International Year for the World's Indigenous People, with a view to strengthening international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous communities in areas such as human rights, the environment, development, education and health.

2. The General Assembly requested the Commission on Human Rights to consider at its forty-seventh session possible United Nations activities in connection with the Year, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session a draft programme of activities based on the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council and of the specialized agencies. The recommendations of the Commission on Human Rights are contained in its resolution 1991/57 of 6 March 1991.

3. As an association of indigenous North American peoples, we have prepared the following suggestions for consideration by the Council.

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* E/1991/30.

Objectives of the Year

4. General Assembly resolution 45/164 focuses on strengthening international cooperation, and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1991/57 recommends that United Nations bodies, regional commissions and specialized agencies consider how their operational activities can most effectively contribute to the solution of problems faced by indigenous people. The principal objective of the International Year should be to improve the quantity and quality of United Nations system assistance to indigenous people.

5. Most United Nations bodies, regional commissions and specialized agencies have competence, resources and expertise related to the aims of the International Year. Most of them already support projects, at least in developing countries, which have a direct impact on indigenous people. The most efficient way to achieve the objectives of the Year is to review, evaluate and, where necessary, modify the management of these existing programmes in order to maximize their contribution to the solution of problems faced by indigenous communities.

6. We suggest that the International Year for the World's Indigenous People be organized as a three-year process:

Review and evaluation of existing operational activities in cooperation with indigenous people themselves (1992);

Implementation of a wide range of demonstration projects, in all parts of the world, to test new approaches (1993);

Cooperative evaluation of demonstration projects, with a view to applying the experience gained to future operational activities (1994).

7. The programme of activities for the International Year to be adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session need not be a detailed menu of activities, but a framework for integrating indigenous people into this three-year planning, implementation and evaluation process. The Economic and Social Council can best assist the Secretary-General and the General Assembly by suggesting an overall framework for this cooperative process.

The cooperative process

8. As recognized by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1991/57, indigenous people are diverse in their cultures and forms of social organization. To be effective, the programme of activities for the International Year must reflect and respect this diversity, which can best be achieved by involving representatives of indigenous people in all stages and at all levels of the planning, implementation and evaluation process.

9. We recommend that each specialized agency, regional commission and other organization of the United Nations system make a commitment to convene, as early as possible in 1992, a technical conference with representatives of indigenous people, with the aim of:

Identifying existing programme areas or capabilities which are of particular relevance and priority for indigenous people;

Agreeing on specific themes or objectives for special projects to be implemented in 1993 as part of the International Year;

Reviewing existing project guidelines and recommending effective means of including indigenous people in the initiation, design and execution of the special projects to be undertaken in 1993;

Describing appropriate procedures and criteria for the evaluation of projects involving indigenous people, in 1993 and thereafter.

10. We would suggest that Governments also convene technical meetings with indigenous organizations, together with resident representatives of United Nations programmes and agencies, at the national level, and consider modalities for maintaining a participatory approach in the design of their country programmes.

Effective coordination

11. The substantive scope of the International Year is very broad and includes human rights, the environment and all aspects of social and economic development. In our view, the development process is central to achieving the aims of the International Year. It will therefore be essential to coordinate the United Nations bodies and agencies which play the largest and broadest roles in development cooperation. For this reason, we suggest that the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation be given an explicit coordinating function for the Year.

12. In this regard, we wish to emphasize the relevance of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development, and note that General Assembly resolution 45/97 of 14 December 1990, as well as Commission on Human Rights resolution 1990/18 of 23 February 1990, request that activities for the implementation of the Declaration be coordinated by the Office of the Director-General for International Economic Cooperation and the Centre for Human Rights.

13. The Council may also wish to consider linking the International Year for the World's Indigenous People, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992) and the World Conference for Human Rights (1993). We note that the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, at its second session (Geneva, 18 March-5 April 1991), adopted a decision recognizing the important contribution that the participation of indigenous people could make to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.